



Gender Sensitivity in India –Reality or Myth

KEYWORDS

Gender Sensitivity, Career post marriage, harassment at workplace

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ABSTRACT *Gender Sensitivity in the new millennium is the core of corporate world. With lesser number of women at top of the ladder it puts forward various queries. The researchers tried to figure it out with the help of a pilot survey where most of the respondents were salaried individuals and premier B-school students. The results were unexpected as most of them felt there was no significant break in women's career post marriage. The survey brings forth a new insight where women continue to contribute economically although it may be marginal.*

1. Introduction:

As India enters into the demographic dividend in the year 2020 with more women entering into the labour workforce a burning topic has emerged. The term is gender sensitivity. It refers to sensitizing about changing behaviour and instilling empathy into the views that we hold about both sexes. It is basically the perception people hold about gender and providing equal opportunity to both the genders for social, economic and political growth.

1.1 Gender Sensitivity in India:

Every year thousand of Indian women enter the workforce with their own aspirations & expectation from the world. Gender diversity and inclusion find mention in several board and CEO agendas and many have taken targets for increasing representation at different levels. But, as per the Grant Thornton IBR 2014, "Women in Business" has some very startling India findings. Some of the prominent findings are.

- The percentage of women in Senior management is 14%,
- 50% of companies with no specific programmes to mentor women.
- The most common role for women in senior management is that of human resource director 21%.

Today it is about calibrating how many women are in the key leadership roles. Indian women need to shed their inhibitions and come out of their cocoon. Recently the C.E.O of Tehalka, Mr. Tejpal is charged for allegedly sexually assaulting a female journalist. This raises innumerable questions about the safety, security and sensitivity towards female workforce of India. Though the government is adopting various measures such as passing of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Bill 2012, much more needs to be done.

1.2 Gender Sensitivity Literature

As gender pertains to the roles performed by men and women and the power relationships between them, gender affects most areas of human existence including health (Vlassoff and Moreno, WHO Report, 2004). This often places them at considerable disadvantage in terms of their access to resources and goods, decision-making power, choices, and opportunities across all spheres of life (RHO, 2004).

One area that has not received the same level of attention especially in the context of Indian Woman Professionals' is the relation between career decisions and family responsibilities. Men are no longer considered to be the sole 'economic provider' for the family. With the rise in females' education, their psychological need to develop self-identity, materialistic orientation, status consciousness, and the rising cost of living, married women are entering into professional careers, and at

the same time taking care of the family members. The dual-career life style is on the rise and joint/extended families are being replaced by nuclear families. As a result, a new picture in marital life is emerging. (Patra & Suar, 2009). The paradigm shift in participation of women in workforce started in 80s, though, last one decade alone has seen a heavy flux of situation (Dutta, & Singh, 2003). Even though Indian husbands are supportive of their wives' participation in the workforce, they are yet to assume responsibility for sharing domestic chores (Ramu, 1989; Wesley, Muthuswamy & Darling, 2009). Women in India experience considerable pressure, in the morning before going out to work and after work, to do all that is necessary for the family (Rout, Lewis and Kagan (1999).

2.1. Research Methodology:

2.1.1. Objectives of the study:

- To study the sensitivity of both the genders towards each other in our modern society basically referring to work place.
- To understand psychological difference of both the genders on career break and progression post marriage.
- To understand if the work environment in companies is free from sexual harassment or not.

2.1.2. Hypothesis

H0:

1. There is no significant difference in the career progression of females after having family.
2. No significant efforts been made to change the male defined jobs for females.

H1:

3. There is significant difference in the career progression of females after having family.
4. There are significant efforts been made to change the male defined jobs for females.

2.1.3. Sample Size & Data Collection:

Primary data was collected by conducting a survey where the sample consisted of 76 respondents including students, salaried, self employed and house wives. The questionnaire consisted of demographic variables as: Name; Gender & Occupation. Secondary data was collected from various journals, newspapers and websites.

2.1.4. Limitation of the study:

The study is limited to Nagpur region only and the sample size is not adequate to draw generalizations. The survey had mainly salaried class and students which may bring forth few new insights to the survey.

3.1. Data Analysis & Interpretation:

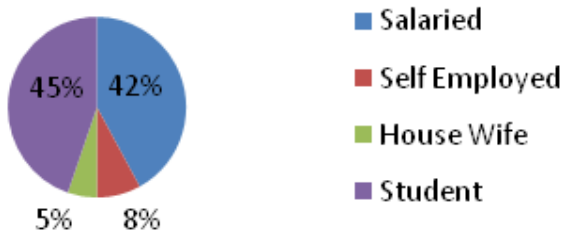
Following is the analysis and interpretation of the demographic details of the sample collected:

Gender
Table 1:

Gender	Number of respondents	In Percentage
Male	33	43%
Female	43	57%

Source: survey sample

Occupation
Graph 1: Occupation



Source: survey sample

The following responses were elicited using a Likert scale-1-5 where 1 is Strongly agree (SA), 2 is Agree (A), 3 is Neutral (N), 4 is Disagree (DA) and 5- Strongly Disagree (SDA).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Sr. No	Question Heading	SA (1)	A (2)	N (3)	DA (4)	SDA (5)	Mean	Mode	Standard Error	p-value
Q1	"Gender is perception difference between men and women"	34	16	14	7	5	2.104	1	0.144	0.00000001
Q2	"Man is the bread earner and women is the care taker"	4	8	7	16	41	4.051	5	0.143	0.000000000946
Q3	"Pressure on today's woman balancing work life in comparison to traditional household woman"	21	25	10	9	11	2.519	2	0.1575	0.00157
Q4	"Domestic violence is widespread across all strata's of Indian society"	26	21	18	5	6	2.246	1	0.1397	0.00000038
Q5	"Modern dressing attracts men to take undue advantage of women"	9	15	6	13	33	3.61	5	0.1695	0.000283

Source: survey sample

- Q1. As the mode value is 1 this proves that gender is basically the perceptual difference between male and female
- Q2. With mode being 5 this shows that the attitude of the alpha male and modern women is changing and they strongly believe that women too are an economic sup-

port to the family.

- Q3. Widening horizons have increased the responsibilities and duties of women in comparison to past times with mode coming to 2.
 - Q4. It is an irony that still domestic violence exists in all strata's of Indian society with mode circling itself around 1.
 - Q5. One can breathe a sigh of relief with all the negative happening in the society, as respondents of this survey believe that modern dressing has nothing to do with all the wrong acts with mode nearing to 5. Majority of them disagreeing to the opinion.
- "Most of the suppression both mental and physical goes unreported"

Table 3: Supression of women

Response	Number of respondents	In percentage
Yes	61	80%
No	15	20%

Source: survey sample

- The women are still chained and bounded to societal norms and still are not able to voice against the supression (total 80%) that they face and maintain silence for the dignity of the family.
- Is Indian working environment safe for either of the gender?

Table 4: Safety of gender

Response	Number of respondents	In percentage
Yes	36	47%
No	40	53%

Source: survey sample

- Safety of working environment still needs miles to leap which is evident from sexual harassment act 2013 coming into force.

Whom do you readily accept as your boss?

Table 5: Control acceptance

Response	Number of respondents	In percentage
Female	37	49%
Male	39	51%

Source: survey sample

- Most of the respondents readily accept male as there boss including female respondents which reaffirms the fact that there is no attitudinal change to redefine the dominant male defined jobs.

HYPOTHESIS 1: The researchers conducted 1-sample t-test to test the below mentioned hypothesis. Assuming a test mean of 3 which represent (neutral response).

- H0: There are no significant efforts been made to change the male defined jobs for females.
- H1: There are significant efforts been made to change

the male defined jobs for females.

Table 6:Descriptive Statistics

t-Test 1-sample	
Test Mean	3
Confidence Level	0.95
N	77
Average	2.766234
Stdev	1.234335
SE Mean	0.140665
T	1.662
TINV	1.665151
p - One sided	0.05033
p - two sided	0.100661

Source: survey sample

Result: Since the p-value (0.05033) is greater than 0.05 we accept the Null Hypothesis that no significant efforts been made to change the male defined jobs for females. This further confirms by another question "Whom do you readily accept as your boss?" where both the genders are more comfortable in accepting male as their boss.

HYPOTHESIS 2

- H0: There is no significant difference in the career progression of females after having family.
- H1: There is significant difference in the career progression of females after having family.

Table 7:Descriptive Statistics

t-Test 1-sample	
Test Mean	3
Confidence Level	0.95
N	77
Average	2.766234
Stdev	1.403905
SE Mean	0.15999
	1.461
TINV	1.665151
p - One sided	0.074051

Source: survey sample

Result: Since the p-value (0.074051) is greater than 0.05 we accept the Null Hypothesis, this shows that there is no significant difference in the career progression of females after having family. This inference may be due to most of the respondents are female and working, contributing to the household

income even if it accounts for part time job.

4.1.Discussion

Based on the responses received and its analysis using likert scale the researchers would bring forth few discussions to improve gender sensitivity:

1. Companies can adopt mentoring by senior women employees which would boost the confidence of women who rejoin the workforce post break.
2. If flexitime is introduced and women are allowed to work from home it will wider the working spectrum of women-workforce and enhance the their economic contribution.
3. Only passing of an legislative act will not ensure safety, perception of people needs to be changed.This could be achieved by corporate training, strict compliance of policies and sensitizing the graduates of B schools.
4. Ensure pay parity between men and women workforce with no gender defined job for a particular gender. This could be done by frequent job rotation as well as teams consisting of both the genders

5.1. Conclusion

Though indian women progress to top of the ladder is still eluding.The modern man is supportive of her but this needs to be revolutioned so that it is not restricted to only certain strata of society.With people voicing their opinion against malpractises India can hope to achieve safe working environment with much needed persuasion from government ,NGOs and public support. The women empowerment would just remain a slogan or a distant dream for India untill the jobs are redifened to suit either of the gender .This will have more women in top managerial position with command in their hand .If there is one thing that societies can do ,it is to create an environment where women are equally treated like men.

Acknowledgement:

Researchers would like to express their sincere thanks to Dr. Kavita Patil without whose guidance and support we would have not been able to fruitfully complete our research work.

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